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ONLY CONGRESSMAN TO SPEAK

Hungary Refugee Program Stirs Burleson's Wrath

By LESLIE CARPENTER

Reporter-News Washington Bureau
WASHINGTON, Dec. 2—The only congressional critic of the administration's Hungarian refugee program to speak up on the Washington scene is a Texas lawmaker, Rep. Omar Burleson of Anson.

And Burleson uses strong language. He calls President Eisenhower's action in setting an emergency quota of 5,000 Hungarian refugees "a fraud on the American people"—and "an injustice" both to the Hungarians being brought to the freedom of the United States and to those being left behind in Austria and Hungary.

The criticism is significant because it is unusual and because Burleson is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Numerous members of Congress have praised the President's action, and some have suggested a far larger quota than that set by the White House in the original Nov. 8 order.

Here for Hearings

As a member of the important committee handling legislation dealing with foreign policy in the House, Burleson is here for a series of hearings aimed at assessing the past, present and future of Uncle Sam's foreign aid program. Sandwiched in between these hearings have been a series of briefings on the Middle East and Hungarian crises by top State Department, military and Central Intelligence Agency officials for committee members.

"I have learned nothing," Burleson said, "which would justify his Hungarian refugee program. What are we doing? We are bringing a few over here, not knowing who they are, what they are or what their political philosophy is. We are wining and dining them, interviewing them in the press and on radio and treating them like royalty. But what will happen? After the newness wears off, they will move, forgotten, into the ghettos of the foreign neighborhoods of the big cities and add to the problems already there."

This, in Burleson's opinion, is "an injustice" to them. And, he adds, the program is also "an injustice" to those left behind, because they are left with "the false hope" that Uncle Sam will also take them in. Also, he noted, most of the refugees being flown to the U. S. daily are younger people—the type which must fight for Hungary if she is ever to win freedom and govern herself again.

Burleson, who has been a sharp critic of the U. S.'s Israel policy from the beginning and has addressed anti-Zionist organizations, continued:

"If we want to launch a refugee program, why don't we do something for the Arabs on the hot desert sands who were expelled from Israel—and we had a lot to do with that. Why don't we do something for them?"

Responsibility for Arabs

Burleson said the U. S. "has responsibility" for displaced Arabs, but has none for Hungarians who fled Soviet guns into Austria.

"Our great problem," Burleson said, "is that we have done too much talking about what we would do throughout the world, and too much is expected of us. There have been too many empty statements and empty promises. Now we can do nothing in Hungary short of war, and the relief program is a fraud."

Other members of Congress have felt the program of admitting 5,000 Hungarians—possibly soon to be lifted to 8,000—was a humanitarian gesture on the part of the U. S. which should win friends for the U. S. throughout the world.

Burleson disputes the contention that it is "humanitarian," arguing that no future, except the hardships of big cities, lies ahead of the refugees.

New Chairman

The House Foreign Affairs Committee is going under a new chairmanship in January, which is one of the most interesting developments of the new Congress.

Rep. James P. Richards of South Carolina, who has been chairman under the present Democratic control,

election.

Moving up to the chairmanship under the seniority system is Thomas S. Gordon, a Chicago Democrat who got to Congress by working his way up the party machine organization. Of Polish ancestry, he is virtually unknown even in Congress. A likeable man personally who isn't noticed very often in the busy corridors of the Capitol, he is anything but an expert on foreign affairs.

Next in line to Gordon among Democrats is Rep. Thomas E. Morgan of Pennsylvania, a medical doctor who spends a lot of his time in his congressional district even when the House is in session. He could not be called an expert in foreign affairs either.

Situation Odd

It is odd that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has not for more than a score of years been made up of the strong

thinkers in the Senate, while the House Foreign Affairs Committee has never been similarly sought after by congressmen.

The best explanation, perhaps, is that there is no vote-getting draw back home in membership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee for congressmen who can belong to only one major committee. Generally, those who use the ballot box every two years back in the congressional district would prefer to have their House member on the Public Works, Appropriations, Agriculture or Ways and Means Committees, where the political gravy is.

There are some intelligent, thinking congressmen on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, such as Burleson, although his reasoning is often contrary to that of the State Department in both Democratic and Republican administrations, and Rep. Brooks Hayes, an outstanding House member from Arkansas. But they are in the minority among Democrats on the committee and rank way down the list in seniority.